

treatment, as well as health promotion activities such as counseling about contraception, pregnancy spacing, early entry into prenatal care, and other health practices and behaviors that should lead to optimal pregnancy outcome. It also provides an opportunity to identify psychosocial and medical risks or conditions before a pregnancy occurs, which facilitates early and appropriate intervention and treatment to address any problems that may complicate pregnancy. Such care initiated prior to pregnancy should continue during prenatal visits and subsequent educational sessions with prenatal care providers. (See attached chapter from *Maternal and Child Health Practices*, 4th edition, 1994)

EXPERIENCES IN OTHER INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES

In essentially all countries in Europe, pregnancy services are a part of the larger, organized health care delivery system. In almost all of these countries, prenatal and delivery care are provided without any out-of-pocket expense to the woman. Some countries even pay women to attend prenatal care. All of these countries provide paid prenatal and postnatal leave for women, with job reinstatement guaranteed. Other types of financial grants and social benefits are given to pregnant women, including paid leave from work for prenatal care visits, family allowances, transportation and housing benefits, and assured day care. Extra support for single women may also be provided.

The prenatal care systems in almost all European countries include prenatal home visiting, if needed, as well as postnatal home visits. Pre- and post-natal care are viewed not just as medical check-ups but also as social and educational opportunities. Benefits are available to all women and their families in these countries.

Given the challenges of assessing maternal morbidity and mortality in these countries, as outlined above, it would be difficult to determine the impact of these social policies on maternal health.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mrs. COLLINS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the *Extensions of Remarks*.]

NATIONAL PARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, a special issue of the *Wilderness Society's* magazine is devoted to *Problems and Prospects in the National Parks*. The cover of *Newsweek* reads: "Can We Save Our Parks?" A report to the director of the National Park Service, *National Parks for the 21st Century: The Vail Agenda*, concludes that the agency is "beset by controversy, concern, weakened morale, and declining effectiveness."

The national and local media have been replete with these horror stories in recent months, but these particular stories were written in 1983, 1986 and 1991 respectively. In short, the problems currently facing the National Park System did not begin the day a Republican majority took over Congress, as some would like to believe. Unfortunately as the election grows closer, the rhetoric surrounding the national parks intensifies.

This campaign of misinformation is not only counterproductive but unfair to the potential visiting public, our constituents, who in effect own these national treasures. The facts do not support the fear mongering. The National Parks need not close their doors this summer because of a lack of funds. In fact, this year's operating budget for the National Park Service increased and Congress initiated a new 3-year fee demonstration program which took effect earlier this year and allows participating parks to keep 80 percent of new fees collected. Why then is the Park Service crying wolf?

For the second year in a row the National Park Service's operating budget will increase. In fiscal year 1997 under both the House and Senate passed budgets every National Park System unit will get an increase in their operating budget. Additional increases have also been recommended to address a critical and growing maintenance backlog in the system. These increases have been offset in part by slowing the growth in new facilities and acreage to help get the Park Service back on their feet and on a path to live within their means.

Operational shortfalls and a backlog of unmet maintenance needs have been perennial problems for the parks. This situation has been exacerbated by the failure of previous Congresses to institute fee and concession reform and by the addition of new units and the expansion of existing sites. In the last decade alone, 36 units and 3.7 million acres were added to the National Park System by previous Congresses.

In 1912 the fee for Yosemite National Park was \$5 per vehicle. That same bargain rate is available at Yosemite today and at other crown jewels as well. Currently fees collected in the parks do not stay with the park, but rather they are returned to the Treasury. While permanent, comprehensive fee reform is still needed, this Congress has taken one important step by initiating a pilot program to expand and reform the fee collection program and allow the parks, not the Treasury, to be the beneficiary. We have given the Park Service a potentially invaluable tool to help themselves. It is now up to them to reap the full benefits.

The problems of the National Park Service are complex and longstanding. As these problems did not develop overnight, neither will the solutions be immediate. Politicizing the parks, however, only serves to heighten tensions and does nothing to solve the real prob-

lems. For those of us who truly care about the health and well-being of our National Park System our mission should not be about placing blame for the situation facing the National Parks, but about working together to find creative solutions to the problems.

We have provided short-term funds and outlined a long-term strategy to accomplish the goals we all share, a National Park System which is truly the crown jewel of our Nation. While the Park Service faces challenges it also has many opportunities and tools at its disposal to meet them. Those of us who share the responsibility for shaping the future of the National Park Service—Congress, the administration, employees of the Park Service, and the parks' many outside partners—must work together to ensure that its future is as distinguished as its past.

□ 1715

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH].

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to take a second to compliment the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. REGULA], who is the chairman of the subcommittee, the Appropriations Subcommittee; that is, the committee that provides the money to run these parks, and I think we need to make it clear, as the gentleman has, and I want to compliment him on his statement, that Republicans consider the national parks to be one of the real jewels of our Federal Government, that we not only want to maintain the parks as we know them, but we also want to begin to solve the problem of the backlogged maintenance, the fact that a lot of things have not been done over the years because there has not been adequate funding.

At the same time, of course, I think it is landmarked; they were able to let the parks keep more of what they collect, and I think the news to Americans is bipartisan support for our national parks. We believe they are a jewel. We believe we are improving them, and we believe that we are not only improving them, but we are taking care of some of the maintenance that should have been done that has not been done. So I think the word to the American citizens, the American people, are if you are looking for an incredible experience, if you are looking for an opportunity to really enrich your soul and the souls of your children, you got to head out to the national parks because there is not a better investment you can make in America, and I appreciate the gentleman's work.

Mr. REGULA. I thank the gentleman for his comments. He is absolutely right. The parks belong to all the people to be enjoyed by all of the people. We are taking care of them. There is no excuse for them not to be open.

I might mention that we put additional funding in on the maintenance. We recognize, as the gentleman pointed out, that we have neglected maintenance in the parks, and we have beefed